

Lithuanian Compromise With Moscow Unravels

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MOSCOW, May 22 — Movement toward compromise on the Baltic republics' campaign for independence stopped today, as Lithuania rejected demands to suspend its declaration of independence and President Mikhail S. Gorbachev warned all three Baltic republics that they must abide by Soviet law.

Lithuanian legislators voted in principle today to suspend important laws enacted since the republic declared independence on March 11, as soon as Moscow agrees to begin negotiations. Parliament is expected to formally approve the text of a resolution on Wednesday, but none of the variations being considered includes any mention of freezing the declaration itself, and members of Parliament confirmed that such action had been ruled out.

Mr. Gorbachev has demanded that Lithuania place a moratorium on its declaration as a condition for beginning talks with Moscow about independence, and it seems unlikely that he will be satisfied by a move that puts a hold only on independence laws.

The Soviet leader had a brief and tense conversation today with the President of Latvia, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, and the President of Estonia, Arnold Ruutel, and reaffirmed his intention to deal toughly with all three Baltic republics in their quest to leave the Soviet Union.

"Mr. Gorbachev confirmed his demand to the three Baltic states to abolish their decisions on independence," Mr. Ruutel told the Estonian news service tonight. He also described the 20-minute conversation as "unpleasant" for both sides, people who spoke with him said.

The Kremlin and the Baltic republics seemed to have struck more conciliatory tones toward one another during a visit by Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d to Moscow last week. During the Baker visit, Mr. Gorbachev met with Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene of Lithuania after the republic's Parliament proposed suspending independence legislation passed since its decision to break from the Soviet Union.

Advice From Baker

American and Lithuanian officials indicated that Mr. Baker had encouraged Mrs. Prunskiene to make some concession on the declaration itself, telling her that freezing the act did not amount to revoking it.

But in today's debate, only a handful of Lithuanian legislators proposed suspending the declaration and the vast majority agreed that there was no way to tamper with the independence declaration without leaving the republic vulnerable to Moscow.

"Let us be honest," Kazimieras Moteika, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Parliament, told the legislators today. "Having chosen the road of independence, we must be firm and remember that we will not veer off it."

Lithuanian officials said that the resolution being debated differs from the proposal brought to Moscow last week by Mrs. Prunskiene in that Parliament now says it is not only willing to, but in fact will suspend independence legislation when Moscow confirms that talks are to begin.

The Lithuanian decision was made despite the worsening effects of an economic blockade imposed by Moscow on the renegade republic more than a month ago.

Deputy Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas announced today that, as a result of a continuing Soviet embargo

Legislators are refusing to suspend their declaration.

on fuel, stricter gasoline rationing would go into effect on Wednesday.

Describing Lithuania as being in a "crisis situation," Mr. Brazauskas said gasoline would be allotted only to ambulances, police and food transport vehicles. Fuel for public transportation will be cut back, he said, and for private vehicles will be cut off.

The new measures will put about 23,000 drivers out of work, doubling the number of people who have been laid off from their jobs since the economic sanctions were first instituted, a spokesman for the Lithuanian Parliament said.

Officials also said that hot water to homes would be reduced by Friday because of the fuel shortages and that power to most industries might have to be cut by the end of the week, although medical and food enterprises will continue to be served.

Most of the republic's apartment buildings are served by a central hot-water pumping station, officials said, adding that for the time being, those buildings that heat their own water with natural gas will not be affected.

In his conversation with Mrs. Prunskiene last week, Mr. Gorbachev threatened to broaden the economic blockade against Lithuania if the republic failed to comply with his demand to suspend its declaration of independence.

The Parliaments of Latvia and Estonia tried to avoid a similar confrontation with Moscow, by voting for transitional periods to independence after Lithuania had voted for a clean break with Moscow. So far, the kremlin has not imposed any sanctions against Latvia and Estonia, but Mr. Gorbachev has condemned both republics' actions as illegal and today repeated his warning that the only way any republic can leave the country is through a new law on secession recently adopted by the Soviet Parliament.